

Message

From: Gutro, Doug [Gutro.Doug@epa.gov]
Sent: 2/14/2018 4:08:47 PM
To: Dunn, Alexandra [dunn.alexandra@epa.gov]
Subject: FW: Admin. Pruitt

From: Dumville, Kelsey
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2018 11:02 AM
To: Gutro, Doug <Gutro.Doug@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: Admin. Pruitt

Kelsey (O'Neil) Dumville
Public Affairs Office
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From: Holmes, Sarah (Shaheen) [mailto:Sarah_Holmes@shaheen.senate.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2018 11:01 AM
To: Dumville, Kelsey <Dumville.Kelsey@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: Admin. Pruitt

Hi Kelsey,

Can you make sure our office is included on these emails in the future?

We were very disappointed with the failure of the delegation to be included in any of the Administrator's events yesterday and the lack of any advance notice of his trip to NH. As I am sure you can imagine, this is especially disconcerting given the number of critical issues that we work with you on and the strong relationship we feel we have with Region 1. We hope this exclusion is not a trend going forward.

Thank you.

Sarah

From: Dumville, Kelsey [mailto:Dumville.Kelsey@epa.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2018 9:37 AM
To: Holmes, Kerry (Hassan) <Kerry_Holmes@hassan.senate.gov>; Holmes, Kerry (Hassan) <Kerry_Holmes@hassan.senate.gov>; Carroll, Patrick <Patrick.Carroll@mail.house.gov>; Cooper-Wall, Sam <Sam.Cooper-Wall@mail.house.gov>
Subject: Admin. Pruitt

Good Morning,

I wanted to share two articles regarding the Administrators visit to NH yesterday. The text and links are below.

Thank you,
Kelsey

EPA chief Scott Pruitt, Sununu talk Coakley, Great Bay

By Kyle Stucker

<http://www.fosters.com/news/20180213/epa-chief-scott-pruitt-sununu-talk-coakley-great-bay>

Tuesday

Posted Feb 13, 2018 at 2:53 PM Updated Feb 13, 2018 at 7:16 PM

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt met with Gov. Chris Sununu during an unannounced visit to New Hampshire on Tuesday, discussing a number of topics, including concerns regarding the Great Bay estuary and the Coakley landfill Superfund cleanup site.

Sununu and his staff confirmed the governor's conversation with Pruitt, describing the session as a "very productive" morning meeting.

"We discussed wide-ranging issues facing New Hampshire and it is critical that our priorities are heard," Sununu said in a written statement.

Pruitt's visit to New Hampshire comes three weeks after Sununu wrote a letter to the head of the EPA inviting him to the Granite State to discuss concerns about how increased Great Bay wastewater regulation could affect Dover, Portsmouth and Rochester. The three cities discharge treated wastewater into Great Bay and all three are part of the Great Bay Coalition, a group the cities formed to advocate for themselves in permitting discussions.

Following the letter, regional and national EPA officials – but not Pruitt – came to Dover for two separate meetings about Great Bay. One was a 30-minute public informational session with local environmentalists, the other a two-hour nonpublic informational session with the Great Bay Coalition.

It's unknown whether Pruitt's trip was scheduled as a result of Sununu's letter or last week's meetings, nor was it known if Pruitt visited Great Bay on Tuesday. Seacoast Media Group reached out to Pruitt's office and EPA spokespeople after it learned Pruitt's visit was happening Tuesday, although they didn't respond to inquiries about the purpose of Pruitt's visit or the locations he visited.

"The governor thanked the administrator for the EPA's personal engagement with the cities of Rochester, Dover and Portsmouth in regard to their long-running issues surrounding their wastewater permits," Ben Vihstadt, Sununu's press secretary, said in a statement about the governor's Great Bay discussion with Pruitt. "The governor and Administrator Pruitt agreed that we must ensure that towns have the flexibility they need to find cost-effective solutions to ensuring that the Great Bay is protected, and ecological restoration can continue."

Pruitt's visit also comes as the state's congressional delegation continues to investigate whether the Coakley landfill is the source of perfluorochemicals, a class of man-made chemicals and a suspected carcinogen, that have been found in drinking water wells in parts of the Seacoast. The 27-acre former landfill is a Superfund cleanup site in North Hampton and Greenland.

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The Washington Post first reported in an article Sunday that Pruitt's trip would occur at some point this week, and that Pruitt would visit a paper company and a Superfund site in addition to meeting with Sununu. Pruitt's office reportedly declined to provide further information about the trip to the paper.

Vihstadt said Sununu "never visited" the Coakley landfill with Pruitt on Tuesday and said he couldn't disclose if Pruitt visited the landfill without Sununu.

Sununu released the following statement about his Coakley landfill conversation with Pruitt:

"I was pleased to hear the EPA agreed to expedite the bedrock water table testing to further ensure that the Seacoast's drinking water has not been contaminated by the Coakley landfill. I am confident that the state, and our towns, will have a positive and productive relationship with the EPA moving forward."

Tests on monitoring wells at the landfill found PFASs, a subset of PFCs, and 1,4-dioxane, another suspected carcinogen, at levels above the EPA's health advisory levels. Many people living near the landfill fear chemicals leaching from Coakley will contaminate their wells, but so far PFCs found in private wells have tested below the EPA's health advisory level. N.H. Department of Environmental Services officials, however, confirmed high levels of PFASs detected in nearby Berry's Brook pose a risk to the environment and should be cleaned up.

Last month, the state's congressional delegation sent a letter to the EPA pushing it to complete a deep bedrock investigation at the landfill as soon as possible to help determine how water and PFCs are flowing away from the site.

The EPA has said there is not enough data to determine if Coakley is the source of the PFCs in local wells. It has also recently said it doesn't yet have a projected start time for the bedrock investigation.

Other topics discussed during Sununu's conversation with Pruitt include lead contamination in drinking water and the EPA's "ongoing efforts to streamline regulatory permitting processes that would return more power and flexibility to the state," according to Vihstadt.

Representatives of the Conservation Law Foundation and the Sierra Club were among the local environmental groups that expressed concern Tuesday about Pruitt's visit being a "secret" one and that Sununu and Pruitt may have talked behind closed doors about rolling back various environmental protections, given some of the decisions Pruitt has made since he entered office.

"It is unfortunate that Mr. Pruitt choose to avoid the public during his February visit to New Hampshire," Catherine Corkery, the director of the Sierra Club's New Hampshire chapter, said in a statement. "The secret visit is a symptom of the transformation of the federal agency that is supposed to protect our health to one that will protect and serve polluters."

Attorneys for the Great Bay Coalition told Seacoast Media Group last week that Dover, Portsmouth and Rochester aren't seeking to roll back any of Great Bay's wastewater regulations or protections. Tom Irwin, the director of CLF's New

Hampshire arm, and Melissa Paly, the waterkeeper for Great Bay, said they hope Sununu conveyed that point as well as the concerns of environmentalists while chatting with Pruitt on Tuesday.

“We want to hold them to that,” said Paly. “We really hope they’re serious about their commitments to water quality and doing what it takes to respect the rule of the Clean Water Act and the enforcement of the EPA.”

According to Irwin, the CLF has requested a meeting with Sununu to discuss Great Bay. No such meeting had been scheduled as of Tuesday.

EPA administrator Pruitt makes surprise visit to New Hampshire

<http://www.concordmonitor.com/EPA-administrator-Pruitt-makes-surprise-visit-to-New-Hampshire-Chris-Sununu-15528963>

By ETHAN DeWITT
Monitor staff

Tuesday, February 13, 2018

The administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency made a surprise visit to New Hampshire on Tuesday, meeting with the governor in an unannounced stop that environmental advocates said raises transparency issues and that critics say is another example of a Trump administration official living lavishly on the taxpayer’s dime.

Scott Pruitt, who heads the federal agency, met with Gov. Chris Sununu for an hour in Concord, according to Ben Vihstadt, a spokesman for the governor. The two discussed an array of New Hampshire-specific environmental priorities, including lead poisoning relief, water testing in the Seacoast area and waste removal, Vihstadt said.

The visit came as part of a wider visit to the Granite State, including to the Central Paper company in Manchester and the Mohawk Tannery Superfund site in Nashua, according to a news release from the EPA.

But Pruitt’s visit also came amid growing controversy surrounding the administrator’s travel patterns. A *Washington Post* article Sunday found that over a year of frequent travel, Pruitt has leaned toward first-class seats and expensive flights, racking up tens of thousands of dollars in overall costs.

Pruitt’s trip to the Granite State appeared to follow the trend. Politico reported Tuesday that the administrator was observed in the first-class section on a flight to Boston earlier that morning.

In addition to the travel expense, some environmental advocates criticized the secrecy of the visit, which was first reported by the *Post* and was not published in either Pruitt’s or Sununu’s public schedules.

In an interview with WMUR Tuesday, Pruitt said the lack of warning and first-class travel arrangements are set by his agency, and decisions are made based on security concerns.

“There have been instances, unfortunately, as I’ve flown and have spent time, of interaction that’s not been the best,” he said. “So ingress and egress off the plane those are decisions all made by our detail team, by the chief of staff, by the administration. ... They place me on the plane where they think is best from a safety perspective.”

EPA representatives did not answer questions requesting information on the scheduling arrangements. And Vihstadt, speaking for the governor, said that he could not comment on the lack of scheduling, stating “the logistics and details of the administrator’s trip to New Hampshire were handled solely by his staff.”

Vihstadt added that the meeting had not been advertised on the governor’s public schedule because it was not a public event.

Speaking on the meeting itself, Sununu touted the visit as an opportunity to highlight the state’s interests, calling the meeting “very productive.”

“We discussed wide-ranging issues facing New Hampshire, and it is critical that our priorities are heard,” the governor said in a statement.

Still, the secrecy of the visit rankled some activists. Catherine Corkery, director of the New Hampshire chapter of the Sierra Club, lambasted the administrator’s decision to exclude the public, calling it “standard practice by Pruitt” and “a symptom of the transformation of the federal agency” he leads.

The lack of warning also deprived the organization, which advocates for environmental causes, from meeting the EPA head directly, Corkery added.

“If the NH Chapter of the Sierra Club could have met with Pruitt, we would have informed him of our state’s strong legacy of support for clean air protections and the science-based evidence of health impacts from pollution sources beyond our borders,” she said.

Chris Pappas, a Democratic candidate for New Hampshire’s 1st Congressional District – which encompasses the environmental Superfund sites observed by Pruitt – released a statement blasting the administrator, accusing him of gutting the EPA and using “taxpayer dollars for self-promotion and elaborate trips.”

But Pruitt called the visit a demonstrative success.

The administrator tweeted photos of a tour taken at the Manchester facility, at which he said he met with forestry officials and discussed the agency’s “efforts to develop a carbon-neutral policy for biomass and clarify federal procurement recommendations for responsibly managed forests.”

He touted the ability to coordinate with the governor on EPA efforts to conduct water tests around the Coakley Landfill Superfund Site in North Hampton. And he championed a dialogue made with the New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association and other forestry representatives to remove restrictions on federal forest procurement processes.

“Understanding the importance of the forest products industry to the State of New Hampshire, EPA is focused on clarifying regulations that were encumbering the industry,” Pruitt said in a statement.

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